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MATWATCH

213 PINE HILLS AVE AUBURN, AL. 36830 (205)826-7522

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STEVE'S SIDELIGHTS By Steve Beverly

AS THE WORLD TURNS

"Let me just tell you this....three weeks from now, you'll have a ton of news for your newsletter."

Those words came Tuesday morning from someone close to both the Ted Turner organization and the NWA and couldn't have come at a more opportunistic time: Nov. 1---the day Ted Turner officially put his organization in the wrestling business.

Those same words are bound to touch off a consortium of rumors, many of which will probably be false and I have a feeling these next couple of weeks of transition will not be the least tension-filled, even for the existing NWA wrestlers.

A lot of you, too, are probably anxious to know what immediate changes will be made in the product and the answer is: most people either don't know or aren't talking. We will relate to you what we have been told from TBS insiders, NWA sources and independent observers whose information we feel is reasonably reliable:

---The week of Nov. 21 is when at least the first beginning substantive changes will be made in the NWA and MATWATCH was told that weekend is when we will begin to see some alteration in the TV shows.

---The Turner people are not altogether thrilled with the Crockett/Dusty plans for STARRCADE '88 and some changes could yet be made (though only speculative plans have been leaked).

---MATWATCH has further learned that some TBS officials are said to have shown Jim Crockett our proposals for a quality STARRCADE card. First, we were told Crockett was angered by it and then proceeded to explain why they wouldn't work. In the process, we were told Crockett had never heard of Big Van Vader.

---ELECTRONIC MEDIA has confirmed for us that the 2-hour WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING edition on Oct. 15 in which the entire show was spent teasing the Road Warriors/Sting incident but only showing the Sting stretcher job at the end drew only a 2.0 national cable rating, believed to be the lowest WCW rating ever.

---The following week's show, in which the turn was shown, only jumped to the 2.2-2.5 level during the two hours.

---Several angles were scheduled to be shot during this week's syndicated TV tapings and we're told none of them were, leading to speculation of veto by the TBS people but that has not been confirmed.

---The turn of Steve Williams and Rick Steiner was accomplished in New Orleans ---but we're told that angle may not air (once again, the turn was done during a Dusty Rhodes/Kevin Sullivan match

which made Dusty the focal point of the heat, as was the case in the aftermath of the Road Warriors' turn and the Ronnie Garvin turn).

---MATWATCH has been told an operations manager for the NWA will be brought on board Dec. 1 and it will not be an existing wrestling name but someone with TV experience. We do not know the name.

In the wrestlers' tent, there is relief that a company with deep pockets now owns majority interest in their fate but a lot of questions remain.

Most of the discussion centers around the all-time record number of turns in a four-month period in the NWA, something which indicates desperation to a veteran of the TV industry, such as myself, because it resembles the panic that sets in on local TV general managers when news ratings begin to slip and they believe the only way to improve numbers is to change the entire anchor team and dump half the reporting staff. Usually, the resulting chaos ends in even lower numbers.

On the Mid-south tour, several wrestlers expressed puzzling reactions to all the turns, one saying he didn't mind his new role if the fans were given a legitimate reason why it happened.

My personal concern, in addition to a strong belief that too many turns are occurring for people to focus in and care about any of them, is in the case of Steve Williams. As I see it, with his obvious "tough guy" image, why does he have to be part of a "unit" such as the Varsity Club when---to those who have followed his career---Dr. Death is capable of being a singular wrecking crew? It makes about as much sense as I felt the Ronnie Garvin turn did as presented....why would a man who was NWA world champion just nine months earlier be placed in an "anything for money" situation?

Of course, the old talk resurfaced in the last week that some key people will cut out of the NWA after Jan. 1 if a certain booker remains in his present role. I don't know if any of that has anything to do with what is supposed to happen in the week of Nov. 21 but I do know the TBS folks are studying that situation carefully.

But as one TBS insider told me last week, "A lot of people fail to remember that the little engine that controls this whole thing is the SuperStation. And when programming, whether it's wrestling or anything else, fails to deliver acceptable ratings, changes have to be made."

AMEN! And the Turner officials have sent memos to Crockett headquarters in Dallas recently that the NWA MAIN EVENT ratings on Sundays are unacceptable but I have to believe the word is also there for that critical Saturday show.

Of course, if certain people are retained, I suppose Dave Meltzer's idea isn't so far-fetched: that Dusty could show up on the Dec. 31 WCW and tell everyone that the year 1988 has all been a dream and everything reveres to the start of the year with The Freebirds, Dr. Death as the UWF champion, Barry & Lex reuniting..... Then let's see what happens to the ratings!!!

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---Some analysis of Jerry Jarrett's reported buy-out of 60% of WORLD CLASS: it's mere sizing up on my part but I'll grant you the Von Erichs would never have sold controlling interest had they not seen the gig was up. In this case, Jarrett was as shrewd as I assumed he was because had he merely bought Ken Mantell's shares, his money would have likely been pumped dry and he'd have wound up out of power, just like Mantell.

---Most people are expecting the Memphis CWA and WORLD CLASS groups to stay separate for a while but a number of observers believe that once Jarrett realizes this Texas vs. Tennessee feud is likely not going to amplify business, World Class may well be folded into the CWA.

---One more note on the Jerry-Kerry unifications: Lawler, of course, won both belts a couple of weeks ago but it was only supposed to be known in Memphis and Dallas. My questions: (1) Why? With cable, there is no way they'll keep the country from knowing and (2) why-why-why, when you are targeting a major PPV show in December as a "unification" special, do you go ahead and unify the two belts, even for a short-term, before the big show? It just says to me these people are far from expert at making a pay card successful.

---Expect some personnel cuts in the WWF of lesser guys in the coming weeks. Titan is having somewhat of a cash flow problem.

---Added to that, the Leonard-Lalonde PPV which Titan promoted Monday night did not exactly spell success. Vince may break even on the thing, thanks to guarantees from some cable operators, but apparently, the key boxing people were dissatisfied with Titan's buildup and the boxing/wrestling mix was too confusing.

---A planned California-based promotion has posted bond with that state's athletic commission but MATWATCH has learned the alliance plans to sit tight for a few months before trying to launch.

---A lot of questions have been raised about the NWA lately but none from here on their recent use of Rick Steiner. It's provided some of the most memorable vignettes in the last two years. One line I failed to include was when Kevin Sullivan was saying he planned to expand the Varsity Club and Steiner interrupted, "Let's get Sting!" I just hope they keep the same comic rhythm going with Rick as a face.

---My colleague Dennis Brent tells me the Road Warriors' NWA world tag team victory over the Midnight Express was in old-style Warriors' fashion as Hawk & Animal literally destroyed Bobby & Stan. Problem now: with the Warriors' refusal to do jobs, you're going to have to have a screw job to ever get the belts out of them.

---By the way, Steve Williams is said to still have the UWF title belt on his shelf and never intends to give it up. (Why should he...he never lost it?) I'm convinced on a few of his interviews, he's nearly split a gut to say, "I was and still am the UWF champion!" Wish he would.

* COMINGS & GOINGS !!!!! *

---One thing I feel TBS must reinstitute is some clean pinfalls deciding matches, particularly the big ones and that may mean getting tough and even firing some of the young guys who refuse to do them. But people are fed up with DQ and screw job endings to the point that many fans have lost faith that title changes will occur in their town. Come to think of it, when was the last clear-cut win Flair has had since his STARRCADE pin on Ronnie Garvin? That is disgraceful for someone of his talent and with world champion status. And remember, even Brad Armstrong scored a clean pin on Flair in Montgomery, Ala., in June.

---CWF plans for Thanksgiving night in Knoxville: a 6-man tag main event with Bullet Bob, Bullet Brad and Bullet Scott vs. Dutch Mantel, Tony Anthony & Jerry Stubbs. It may be strictly my view---and I have some good friends in that promotion---but I believe Tom Prichard has been too deeply devalued (as well as his belt) since THE ROAD TO BIRMINGHAM and he could have been tremendously over if he had been used properly.

---A reminder that the BRUISER BRODY retrospective special with Joe Pedicino and John Henderson airs on FNN/SCORE Saturday at 5 EST/2 PST.

---Just saw some recent FLORIDA CHAMPIONSHIP tape and the new FLORIDA FLASHBACK segment is heavily coated with old DUSTY RHODES matches. I've had an outright denial that FCW is negotiating to become a farm club for the new NWA but one wonders with the early push Dusty's son DUSTIN is getting if something isn't brewing if TBS decides to buy out Dusty's contract.

---One non-Dusty flashback was an old 1966 match of Lou Thesz vs. Matt Jewel, a black wrestler who---in the days before the South allowed racially mixed matches---worked the circuits against Tom Jones, who's jobbing for World Class now. Just watching it makes me realize how Thesz could have killed some of these guys today.

---Late word from World Class headquarters indicates early optimism from the plans of Jerry Jarrett's people, which apparently include fresh talent for Texas. The promotion has apparently saved its traditional Saturday night slot on KTVT in Dallas. The NWA had been negotiating hot and heavy for it.

---Past Jim Crockett Promotions creditors are beginning to get their payoffs but MATWATCH has been asked by several not to list specific amounts for legal reasons.

---Finally, the Associated Press story on the Turner NWA buyout placed it mostly in terms of a "merger" and the corporate name will be called Universal Wrestling Corporation, though the NWA monicker will be kept in the arenas and TV.

(SPECIAL NOTE: Our RATINGS RAP does not appear this week because the figures were not available due to a computer error with A.C. Nielsen.)

PINFALL PROFILE: JESSE VENTURA SPEAKS OUT

Thanks to MATWATCHer Dan Farren, I've had a chance to view Jesse Ventura's complete appearance on the FNN/SCORE call-in show, THE FAN SPEAKS OUT.

Much of what you heard from Jesse was the predictable stuff (did you think he would actually give any organization credit for parity with the WWF?) but he did open up frankly on the subjects of steroids, Ric Flair, a wrestlers union, his AWA days and a possible ring return:

- * **STEROIDS:** Jesse called them "more dangerous than cocaine." As the FDA's spokesman against steroids, he says the only reason people haven't seen them that way is that it "hasn't really come to their attention until Ben Johnson in the Olympics." Ventura favors a bill by Sen. Joe Biden making steroid distribution a felony.
- * **AWA:** Last week, we reported Jesse's line that Verne Gagne "was the worst person I ever wrestled for" and said his pending lawsuit against Gagne for back pay comes to trial next month.
- * **A HOGAN-FLAIR MATCH:** "It'll never happen because the two organizations (WWF and NWA) are too hostile to each other. As I see it, Hogan would have everything to lose and nothing to gain and Ric Flair would have everything to gain. The way we (WWF) see it, we're number one, so why acknowledge the other guy."
- * **THE NWA ITSELF:** Several callers told Jesse they preferred the NWA style of wrestling to the WWF. JESSE: "To each his own. It's like when two restaurants go up on the same street with a similar menu. Some people

like one restaurant and others like the other. It has to do with the manner of presentation. But it doesn't bother me if you like them better. I wrestled in the NWA for five years when it was a mostly regional group."

- * **WRESTLERS UNION:** "I think it's terrible that there isn't one already. You know, most athletes aren't good businessmen or financial planners. They need some kind of organization just like football and baseball players to help them after they retire." Ventura suggested no one has ever tried to organize a union (which is not so) but believes there will eventually be one.
- * **JESSE'S FUTURE:** Strictly in the movies. "I had 11 good years in the ring and enjoyed it tremendously but my time's over. I think the problem with too many athletes are that they don't know when to quit. I still have my health and I don't want to go back and try to risk it."

The entire hour was entertaining, largely because of how articulate Ventura is and how at ease he is with callers. Particularly revealing was when Jesse said he'd never casually apply a hold on another person because of what happened in the 1985 Richard Belzer-Hulk Hogan incident on LIFETIME. "What usually happens in a case like that is it winds up in the hands of attorneys if someone gets hurt," said Ventura, "and I ain't got no love for attorneys." I wish he'd said "don't got no."

This was an excellent sample for a possible regular wrestling call-in show that Dan Wolfe of SCORE has been trying to develop. If this is a sample of its potential, I hope FNN will move forward with it with one piece of advice: please don't ever ask Robert Gibson or Abdullah the Butcher to be a guest.

Y O U S A I D I T ! ! ! !

I'm sure glad to hear of the finalization of the Turner takeover. I hope all of our expectations aren't overestimated. But then again, nothing can be worse than what we've had to put up with for the last 2 years!

KEITH D. WILLIAMS
ELIZABETH NJ

The (Don) Owen card on 10/22 was OK. A good size crowd and VERY loud and into it. Lots & lots of screaming girls for (Steve) Doll & (Scott) Peterson. I am terribly disappointed over missing Fujinami. Right now, he is my #1 wrestler of year.

GLENN FOX
SEATTLE WA

The real winning configuration for the NWA is Ric Flair, Sting, Luger & various guest faces vs. lead heel Dream, Windham, Dr. Death & various guest heels. If Dusty is unavailable as a heel, he should simply be dropped without a word as Vince does. The demise of the NWA we've all sadly witnessed is due to the inescapable fact that America would rather see a rerun of a test pattern than Dusty Rhodes.

MARC ARONIN
DENVER CO

So the eventual upshot of the Von Erich-Lawler Cotton Bowl match is the titles being "held up" for the PPV show--classic Verne retro-think!! Was anyone dense enough to believe they'd see the 10/15 match actually resolve anything?

Roadies turn a classic piece of moron booking. Instead, they should have let the Warriors take the titles as FACES (preferably in Chicago as an apology for all those Arn/Tully screwjobs), and THEN turn, announcing that, now that they've won the belts, it's no more Mr. Nice Guy. I still don't know what Sting did to them. Maybe they snacked before the match and the Danger repeated on them.

BILL KUNKEL
WOODHAVEN NY

(FSB: Wanna bet who the fans cheer if the Warriors meet Dusty/Bigelow as planned at STARRCADE?)

If Ted Turner really wants to get me back into the fold, he'll immediately hire Bill Watts to run the NWA. Pay off Crockett & Dusty...whatever it takes....just get a genuine leader who listens to the fans to take it back where it needs to be.

ART KOHN
NORFOLK VA

(YOU SAID IT!!! appears monthly in MATWATCH. Letters to 213 PINE HILLS AVE., AUBURN AL 36830.)

TV TEMPO (Weekend of Nov. 4-6)

RATINGS: PINFALL! - Must See. PILEDRIVER - Excellent. POWERSLAM - Good. DRAW - Average. RESTHOLD - Fair. BOMB - Poor. PLUS - Midscale rating.

(WNC) - Invader III/Ricky Santana DQ over Chicky Starr/Mr. Pogo; Victor Jovica d. The Exotic; Brad & Bart Batten d. Dan Kroffat/Bobby Jagers; Detroit Demolition d. Rufus R. Jones. POWERSLAM.

(MEMPHIS) - Bill Dundee/Todd Morton d. Keith Eric/Bob Roberson; RPMs d. Frazier & Foster; Robert Fuller/Jimmy Golden d. Ken Raper/Alan Reynolds; Nature's Best/Jeff Jarrett d. Rough & Ready/The Executioner; Brickhouse Brown/Scott Steiner/Brian Lee win DQ over Phil Hickerson/Gary Young/Cactus Jack Foley. DRAW-PLUS.

(SCW) - Chic Donovan d. Marc White; Mr. Wrestling II/Ray Candy d. The Scorpions; Tommy Rich d. Bobby Bennett; Abdullah the Butcher d. Marc Allen. INTERVIEW: Terry Gordy who announces he will team with Rich next week vs. II & Michael Hayes on TV. BOMB-PLUS.

(ANA) - Saturday show postponed to Monday at 4 (EST) on ESPN. This weekend airs Friday at 12 midnight (ET).

(W. CLASS) - Brian Adias d. Vince Apollo. ANGLE: Eric Embry offers to help Von Erichs and when Skandor Akbar enters to question him, Eric decks Akbar and does same to Iceman Parsons until Black Bart enters for 3-on-1 attack & Eric juices. Kendall Windham/Blackjack Mulligan no contest vs. Iceman/Bart when Embry runs in on Akbar and 6-man melee ensues; WORLD CLASS TAG TITLES: Michael Hayes loses to Samoan Swat Team when SST attack Harvey Martin & Steve Cox and Cox is unable to wrestle. POWERSLAM.

(PWTW) - From Atlanta WWF Omni show: WWF, Honky Tonk Man wins squash; MEMPHIS, Brickhouse Brown/Jeff Jarrett DQ over Robert Fuller/Jimmy Golden; WWC, Hercules Ayala d. Ricky Santana; W. CLASS, Kerry wins elimination match over The Beast/Iceman when Eric Embry comes to Von Erich's aid; SUPER CLASH III PREVIEW: Jerry Lawler, Kerry sign unification title match. INTERVIEWS: Bolsheviks, Anabolic Warrior. MARS WRESTLER OF WEEK: Eric Embry. DRAW-PLUS.

(CNF) - Alan Martin fined \$2,000 (which he later pays) for attack on Lord Humongous; Danny Davis wins DQ over Grappler II (Rick Hazzard) when Ken Wayne, hidden under the ring, runs in and attack continues until Tom Prichard saves; Brad Armstrong d. Greg Brown; Prichard wins DQ over Grappler II, who had challenged for CNF belt. Prichard juices heavily and Grappler steals belt; Johnny & Davey Rich d. Phil Castille/The Warrior (Bill Tabb); Tim Horner wins DQ over Masa Chono when

Martin, attempting to interfere, hits Chono with suitcase and Chono later connects karate kick on Martin; Willie B. Hert d. J.D. Wolfe. DRAW-PLUS.

(WWF) - [SPOTLIGHT]: Anabolic Warrior d. Porkchop Cash; Red Rooster d. Reno Riggins; Tully & Arn d. Scott Casey/Sam Houston; Other winners: Rockers, Bad News Brown, King Haku. RESTHOLD. [CHALLENGE]: Red Rooster d. Tommy Angel; Rockers d. Iron Mike Sharpe/Steve Lombardi; Jake Roberts d. Bob Blackburn; Anabolic d. Porkchop. BOMB. [SUPERSTARS]: Anabolic Warrior d. George South; Curt Hennig (WWF TV ring debut) d. Chris Zarna; From SNME: Roberts d. Rick Rude; Other winners: Bubba Bossman, Ron Bass, Dino Bravo. BROTHER LOVE w. Ted DiBiase team for SURVIVOR SERIES II. RESTHOLD.

(NWA/TBS) - [NCW]: WORLD TAG TEAM CHAMPIONSHIP (from New Orleans): Road Warriors d. Midnight Express; Ron Simmons d. Rip Morgan when Shepherders run in before Eddie Gilbert saves; Stan Lane wins DQ over Menace II when Paul E. Dangerously & Original Midnight Express surprise attack Lane & Eaton and after Paul E. hits Jim Cornette with his phone, Cornette does horrendous juice job; NWA TV TITLE: Mike Rotunda d. Bob Emery; Other winners: Shepherders, Bam Bam Bigelow Fantastics, Lex Luger, Abdullah the Butcher, Gilbert. KEY INTERVIEW: Kevin Sullivan announces Steve Williams has joined Varsity Club and Rick Steiner says he's beaten Dr. Death. Steiner also asks for title match on TV vs. Ric Flair next week. DRAW. [NWA MAIN EVENT]: From Columbus GA Bash, Sting DQ over Mike Rotunda in TV title match; From Lansing MI, Animal/Paul Ellering DQ over Midnight Express (new match!); From WORLD WIDE: Gilbert & Simmons win U.S. tourney match from Perez/Zbyszko (see below). RESTHOLD-PLUS...an improvement but I still hate the voiceovers.

(NWA/SYND.) - [WORLD WIDE]: U.S. TAG TEAM TOURNAMENT, Gilbert/Simmons d. Al Perez/Larry Zbyszko when Larry Z misses and hits Perez with numachucks. Al & Gary Hart get into shoving match afterward; Midnight Express d. Bruce Hollis/Mike Jackson; Other winners: Shepherders, Uncle Ivan, Road Warrior Animal. RESTHOLD-PLUS...too many interviews. [NWA PRO]: Bobby Fulton d. Jerry Price; Russian As-

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assassins d. Randy Hogan/George South; Other winners: Nephew Nikita, Simmons, Animal, Steiner. LOUISVILLE SLUGGER: Cornette v. Shepherders. BOMB-PLUS.

LINE OF THE WEEK - 1. Jim Ross, TBS: "Ban Ban might be material for one of Cher's next boyfriends. She likes tattoos and big guys." 2. Ross, "They (The Shepherders) put a big vat of boiling grease in their living room for Halloween and invited kids in to bob for french fries." 3. Cornette, NWA PRD: "Are the Shepherders really crazy or are they drunk on Woolite?" 4. Dutch Mantel, CWF: "This Alan Martin looks like some kind of genetic experiment gone wrong." 5. Mantel, "I like to sit in front of my big screen TV and stick a fork in my dog when he gets out of line." 6. Bobby Jagers, PMTW: "Nobody would ever hire you to be an imagemaker, Rick St. James." 7. Jesse Ventura, WWF: "If Hacksaw Jim Duggan represents America, then I ain't bothering to vote." 8. Heenan & Monsoon, WWF: GORILLA, "You're gonna see someone who's close to perfect." BOBBY, "Who? Porkchop Cash?" 9. Rick Steiner, WORLD WIDE: "Kevin, how come you don't slap Mike? I bet you don't slap Dr. Death." 10. Ross, TBS, on Bigelow's head tattoos: "They're colored, too! Those aren't crayons." 11. Road Warrior Hawk, TBS: "You can never lose a friend who was never one to begin with."

BEST PICTURES - 1. PMTW, for Boni Blackstone's fearful facial expressions while interviewing Anabolic Warrior. 2. NWA PRD, for Steiner grabbing some popcorn from a fan to eat during match. 3. WORLD CLASS, split-screen of Akbar and female fan showing up with Akbar mask. 4. TBS, closeup of Abdullah chewing ringrope.

BEST AUDIO - WWF, for Curt Hennig asking Chris Zarna, "You want to be a wrestler boy?" during match.

BEST IMPERSONATION - Fantastics, for imitation of Shepherders' yell and facial expressions.

BLOOPER AWARDS - 1. TBS, for shot of floor director cueing Tony Schiavone on WCW. 2. Mantel, CWF, for calling Bill Tabb "The Black Assassin," his former name rather than his CWF name, "The Warrior."

PLAGIARISM AWARD - Danny Davis, CWF, for "It's good for me... bad for you" at the end of his interview.

BOO AWARD - ESPN, for second straight weekend pre-emption of AWA. Even though this isn't my favorite association, ESPN once again proves it has little regard for its wrestling product by not even promoting its pre-emptions.

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BRUISER BRODY TAPE: The Brody retrospective tape which will be highlighted on the FNN/SCORE special is \$34.95 and available from BAM, 5230 Sereno Dr., Temple City CA 91780. Or for VISA or MASTERCARD orders, call 1 (800) 346-4664 between Nov. 12 and Dec. 12. An order form is available below for mail:

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PARTING BLOWS

Be still my heart! Two angles on one TBS Saturday night show! One with heavy juice! Will Gordon Solie be back next??? Realistically, I do not think TBS made the call on that show since they didn't take over in full until Tuesday but it was a move in the right direction. I only rated it a DRAW because there were still too many squashes for a 2-hour show but the Simmons/Morgan opener wasn't bad and the angles weren't silly...they genuinely meant something! Now if we can get some better matches and more soap opera quality Add the Express-Express angle from Sat. TBS to your TV ANGLE OF THE YEAR nominations. If you didn't see it, get a tape....You may argue but I think it was wise NOT to have Paul E. do an interview after the Condrey &

Rose attack because that heat will be so intense you don't want to shoot your entire wad in one week.... I thought the announcers' angle that Condrey, Rose & Paul E. "aren't even in the NWA" was a note of credibility for casual fans and I liked the fact Ross was aghast at Cornette's bleeding rather than yelling in this case. It really sold it!... If you wonder why the cameras stayed so wide, Ted Turner has had that edict since the mid-'70s any time juice is in an angle.

The Express will meet the Original Express at the Showboat in Las Vegas but that will be their only meeting before STARRCADE.... Dangerously was taken bleeding from the throat on a flight back to New York last weekend. A throat infection burst from the pressure on the plane and paramedics gave him attention on landing. That's why Paul's interviews will be so hoarse this Saturday.... At CLASH IV live on TBS from Chattanooga Dec. 7, Flair & Windham will meet Eaton & Lane and Condrey & Rose will be involved in a big STARRCADE-setting angle.

I thought Dutch Mantel & Charlie Platt blended better than in any week previously Saturday on CMF.... I'm still puzzled, though, about why they have not put Tom Prichard over any more than they have. He really took a juicing Saturday against Hazzard.... MATWATCHer David Williamson caught a slipup last week. Willie B. Hert didn't go against the Bullet in Chattanooga but Pez & Bob challenged Stubbs & Anthony in a no DQ.

The Michael Hayes/Terry Gordy migration to Southern can't help but put a boost into the Jerry Blackwell promotion.... I wonder if someone said something to David Crockett. He didn't grin through most of the heel interviews Saturday as usual. But as one colleague of mine said, "I'll believe TBS is serious about wrestling the day David is off the shows.".... At least NWA MAIN EVENT had one new match Sunday but the studio voiceover bit just doesn't work. The NWA voiceover shows lower the crowd noise too much and the WWF overdrives the crowd so that you can't hear the announcers well.

Jim Ross did a nice job on the Road Warriors' title change but didn't quite shift it into UWF overdrive.... But I'll say this: I don't ever want to see a major title change shot with one camera again. That was far too dizzying to keep up with the action and hopefully, TBS won't stand for it.... Ross' mother's birthday was Monday and Schiavone said on NME, "As you can see, your son is still well-fed."

From last Thursday's HOLLYWOOD REPORTER: the Turner NWA purchase was quoted as "just below eight figures.".... My weekend football responsibilities have kept me from seeing LEARNING THE ROPES the last 2 weeks. I'll get back to reviewing it next week.... Flair will meet George South in an 8-minute match Saturday on TBS that I'm told does nothing for Ric's credibility as world champ.... I hope Jarrett will consider a new top-quality announcer for World Class, maybe Pedicino or Solie or even having Lance Russell double dip in Texas.... A few final TV notes: CMF is off in Columbus GA for WWF SPOTLIGHT, NWA MAIN EVENT back on KNBC but at 4 a.m. Sundays in L.A., and WITO in Birmingham is said to be hot at the wrestling industry in general after losing CMF to ABC affiliate WBRC. Til' next week, God Bless! FSB.

VERY, VERY LATE NOTES

WILD WEST TV: Actually a combined taping with the ladies' group FLAIR in San Bernadino CA Saturday night. Joe Pedicino & Boni Blackstone did some of the commentary. Among the matches: Bill Irwin d. Tim Patterson (and Irwin ripped the seat of his pants on his final move); Bob Bradley Jr. (a 180-pounder who got a big local pop) d. The Friar (Jesse Hernandez); Chavo & Mando Guerro d. Billy Anderson & Louie Spicolli; and several FLAIR matches, including Debbie Pelletier (the Killer Tomato) d. Susan Sexton.

About 125 fans showed for the taping. Insiders say WILD WEST has no TV syndication time yet but is trying to get a number of matches in a "bank" when it restarts.

TALENT MOVES: Lotsa talk amongst the NWA guys that a major cutback in managers will come before the end of the month.... Plus, I've had word that Tim Horner may be headed for the WWF but absolutely NO confirmation on that.



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